

First Nations - Queensland Synod resolutions

31st Synod 2014

GENERAL PROPOSALS

Recognise Campaign for constitutional recognition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

It was RESOLVED that the Synod –

14.67 (a) Join with UnitingCare Queensland to support the campaign to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Constitution of Australia.

(b) Become an official *Recognise* campaign partner and encourage congregations, presbyteries, and all other Uniting Church entities to join in the *Recognise* campaign.

(c) Encourage all Church members and staff to sign up as a supporter of the *Recognise* campaign and further encourage congregations to listen to Indigenous peoples as they engage the question of constitutional recognition.

(d) Call on the Government to work with urgency towards holding a referendum.

(e) Work with Uniting Justice to ensure this issue is considered by the 14th Assembly.

(CONSENSUS)

24th Synod 2004

It was resolved that the Synod -

04.76 Refers the proposals listed below to the Council of Synod -

(f) Proposal 21 - Alcohol Management Programmes

(a) commends the Queensland Government on its implementation of Alcohol Management Programmes in partnership with some Indigenous communities on Cape York;

(b) encourages the Premier and Minister for Indigenous Affairs to remain steadfast in resourcing and strengthening the services that support the Alcohol Management Programmes;

(c) invites members of the Uniting Church in Queensland to abstain from alcoholic beverages in empathy with Indigenous communities seeking to free themselves from substance abuse. 21st Synod 1999

RECONCILIATION

It was resolved that the Synod -

Recognising that representatives were substantially in favour of the following Notice of Motion but agreeing that there was insufficient time for adequate discussion,

(a) commends the Notice of Motion to congregations and presbyteries with the request for response to the General Secretary no later than 22 November 1999 for advice to the Council of Synod; and
(consensus)

(b) refers the Notice of Motion and any comments received from congregations and presbyteries to the Council of Synod for urgent consideration at its November 1999 meeting.

(consensus)

The following is the Notice of Motion referred to -

In committing itself to the ongoing process of national reconciliation and covenanting within The Uniting Church in Australia, -

(a) *affirms a national declaration for reconciliation as set out hereunder, noting that this form of words is the outcome of deliberations by the National Executive of the UA/CC as it considered the draft put forward for public comment by the National Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation -*

The Declaration

We, the people of Australia, of many origins as we are, make a commitment to go on together recognising the gift of one another's presence.

We value the unique status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the owners and custodians of these lands and water.

We respect, recognise, and affirm the practice of continuing customary laws, beliefs and traditions.

We wish to experience more of the spirituality of Indigenous peoples and their understanding of their relationship with the land and water.

We acknowledge this land was colonised without the consent of the Indigenous landowners and that the process of colonisation involved violent dispossession, murder, rape, breakup of families, and cultural genocide.

We acknowledge that this is the truth. We commit ourselves to heal the wounds of the past so that we can struggle together for a just and proper settlement.

And so we take this step: as one part of the nation expresses its sorrow and profoundly apologises for the injustices of the past, so the other part accepts that apology and forgives.

Acknowledging and seeking to learn from the mistakes of the past our journey in a new direction begins.

We commit ourselves to learn our shared history, walk together and grow together to enrich our understanding.

We desire a future where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and all Australians, enjoy equal rights, share opportunities and responsibilities.

We commit ourselves to enact legislation that will bring about a more just society, end disadvantage and respect the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to determine their own destinies.

Therefore, we stand proud as a united Australia that respects and recognises the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and continuing relationship to the land and waters and provides justice and equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and all Australians.

(b) Commits itself to the following strategies which will further the ongoing practical work of reconciliation within the church and the wider community -

1. ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

- *Assist the process of cross-cultural awareness for non-Indigenous people and Indigenous people which outlines the similarities and differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous economic and political systems and concepts;*
- *Encourage UCA members to make themselves available for Indigenous people who want to start and maintain their business;*
- *Encourage the Synod's accountancy and finance services to make themselves available to assist Indigenous people in financial management skills training and business development;*
- *Provide mentoring and other assistance to Indigenous people wishing to establish businesses;*
- *Design and implement a 2% Indigenous employment strategy for UCA Synods, the Assembly and schools, hospitals, and agencies. This would require mentoring within the workplace and creating culturally sensitive workplaces;*
- *Advocate for cultural awareness training in workplaces;*
- *Create and finance a nation-wide strategy to encourage community development trained mission co-workers to support the UAICC's ministry.*

2. DISADVANTAGE

- *Encourage UCA hospitals to develop Indigenous health policies;*
- *Provide hospitality for Indigenous families visiting sick relations in hospitals;*
- *Provide cultural awareness training for health workers, particularly in regions where they will be servicing Indigenous people;*

- Encourage UCA schools to develop Indigenous education policies;
- Encourage the employment of Indigenous Liaison Workers in Uniting Church agencies;
- Encourage partnership programs between Uniting Church schools and other schools who teach Indigenous students;
- Advocate for regional investigations into Indigenous educational service delivery;
- Increase advocacy in the areas of housing, law and justice system .

3. RIGHTS

- Continue The Uniting Church in Australia's advocacy role in promoting social justice and Indigenous rights;
- • Encourage the Commonwealth Government to –
 - * provide constitutional recognition of Indigenous rights and removing aspects of the Constitution which can be used to discriminate on the basis of race;
 - *provide Constitutional protection to the Racial Discrimination Act;
 - *provide for Indigenous representation in the Parliament;
 - *affirm and recognise native title, land rights, customary law and Indigenous heritage protection.

RECONCILIATION

- Require of theological colleges that cultural awareness training be a requirement of theological training and elders' preparation;
 - Make ongoing covenanting commitments at the National, Synod, Presbytery and Congregational levels - which will include covenanting statements, use of Indigenous protocols and symbols, recognition of Indigenous land through statements and plaques;
 - Encourage more youth exposure programs;
 - Work with the UA/CC towards developing an Indigenous theology.
- and requests the Synod to consult with the Assembly regarding the implementation of this policy.

19th Synod 1996

RECONCILIATION - INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS

96.153 (a) Affirms its commitment to ongoing reconciliation between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians;

(b) Urges the Federal Government to give a full and unequivocal commitment to the process of reconciliation and to reconsider its decision on funding to the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation; and (carried)

(c) Urges the Prime Minister to make a public statement affirming the dignity of all Australians and denouncing all forms of discrimination and racism which undermines and threatens the position of indigenous people and diminishes all Australians. (carried)
(agreement)